

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, December 9, 2005

CHIEF RAMSEY RESPONDS TO INCREASE IN VIOLENT CRIME

In response to a troubling, late-year increase in homicides and robberies, Chief Ramsey recently announced new steps to increase crime-fighting patrols. The Chief has temporarily suspended the scheduling provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the MPDC and the Fraternal Order of Police. Doing so allows commanding officers to change an officer's tour of duty, days off or extend work hours without prior notice. Normally, commanding officers must give officers a 14-day notice before changing their schedules. In addition, leave for Department members will be restricted until further notice. The suspension of the agreement is being implemented to combat a recent increase in certain serious crimes. In a recent 32-day period, the District experienced 24 homicides and 364 robberies. The Chief's move allows commanders the flexibility to change tours of duty and days off to quickly respond to changing crime trends in DC neighborhoods. An emphasis will be placed on homicides, assaults with deadly weapons, robberies and weapons violations. In announcing the move, Chief Ramsey said he is proud of his officers' work over the past year. "Our members have done an outstanding job in combating crime and demonstrating their commitment to the citizens they serve. However, crime trends can change rapidly, and we must be able to quickly make changes to combat those trends," he said.

- ① Read the news release at:
<http://app.mpdcc.gov/newsroom/newsroom.asp?sid=239000>
- ① Despite the recent increases in homicides and robberies, preliminary statistics indicate that, with the exception of a 6 percent increase in robberies, all other categories of serious crimes have decreased during 2005. View the latest data at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,q,543329.asp>

RESIDENTS REMINDED ABOUT REWARDS IN HOMICIDES, ROBBERIES, OTHER VIOLENT CRIMES

In an effort to enlist even more community support in solving crimes and prosecuting offenders, the MPDC reminds members of the public that the Department operates and supports a number of reward programs. These programs offer members of the community substantial cash rewards for information that can help the MPDC close cases. For example, the MPDC offers a reward of up to \$25,000 to anyone who provides information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for any homicide committed in the District of Columbia. This reward applies to recent cases or homicides that were committed years ago. In October, Chief Ramsey announced that the Department is also offering an enhanced reward of up to \$5,000 to anyone who provides information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for any robbery in DC. The reward amount increases to up to \$10,000 for information in robberies that involve a life-threatening injury to the victim. Anyone with information about an unsolved homicide or robbery in DC is asked to call the MPDC's 24-hour command center at (202) 727-9099. And, of course, the Department continues to support the Crime Solvers program, which offers rewards of up to \$1,000 for information that leads to the arrest and indictment of the person or persons responsible for other felony crimes. The Crime Solvers telephone number is (800) 673-2777. All calls to Crime Solvers are confidential, and callers need not provide their names.

- ① Read the news release on the recent increase in robbery rewards at:
<http://app.mpdcc.gov/newsroom/newsroom.asp?sid=197000>
- ① For background information on Crime Solvers and to view some of DC's "Most Wanted," go to:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1243,q,544785,mpdcNav_GID,1523,mpdcNav_.asp

WATCH OUT FOR CHARITY SCAMS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

The holiday season is traditionally a time of giving, with many charities seeking contributions to help the less fortunate. But it's also a time when some con artists try to take advantage of other peoples' generosity by going door-to-door for "charitable donations" – when there is really no charity involved. If someone shows up at your door asking for donations, always ask for identification. It's also a good idea to request printed information about the charity, or a phone number or website that you can contact for more information. Also, find out how the funds will be used. Be especially wary of people who ask for cash only or for children soliciting funds who are not accompanied by an adult. If you are not satisfied with the answers you get, don't give – at least not right away, until you have had a chance to do your research. As an alternative, help a charitable organization you know and like instead.

WITH WINTER WEATHER UPON ON, THE MPDC ENCOURAGES MOTORISTS TO DRIVE SAFELY

Now that DC has had its first taste of winter weather, the MPDC reminds motorists to follow some common-sense preparations and safety tips. One of the most important things that drivers can do is to ensure that their vehicles are winterized, with checks not only of the engine and battery, but also tires, windshield wipers and fluid, and an emergency kit. Once you're on the road, drivers should practice these basic safety precautions:

- Reduce your speed and increase the distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you.
- Avoid abrupt lane changes, turns or other maneuvers – and pay extra attention to other drivers who may do these things.
- If you skid on ice, don't panic. First, take your foot off the brake or accelerator. Second, don't "fight" the car and instead steer into the direction it is traveling to regain traction. Third, begin to accelerate slowly.
- To brake on ice and snow, remember which kind of braking system you have: with anti-lock brakes, keep the pedal depressed and do not pump the brakes; if you do not have anti-lock brakes, then apply the brakes firmly. If the brakes start to lock up, slowly release the brake pedal until the tires are no longer skidding and you can feel them braking properly again.
- Guard against "SUV overconfidence." While four-wheel-drive vehicles do a good job gaining traction, SUV drivers can experience difficulty keeping control and stopping, just as the drivers of other vehicles.
- Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle to include a scraper/brush, flashlight, flares or reflective triangles, jumper cables, blankets or extra clothing, non-clumping kitty litter or sand for traction, de-icer for windshield and locks, extra windshield washer fluid, a first-aid kit and a cell phone.

NEWS & NOTES

6th Annual Awards Ceremony. Outstanding police officers, civilian employees, other agency partners and community members who have helped to make DC neighborhoods safer over the past year will be recognized during the MPDC's 6th Annual Awards Ceremony on Wednesday evening, December 14, 2005, at DAR Constitutional Hall in Northwest. The public is invited to attend this free event. **Details at:** <http://app.mpdcc.gov/newsroom/newsroom.asp?sid=234000>.

2005 Holiday SoberRide Under Way. From December 9 through January 1, 2005, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program is offering DC-area residents who have had too much to drink free taxicab rides home, through its annual Holiday SoberRide program. The service is offered from 8 pm to 4 am every day. To request a SoberRide cab, call (800) 200-TAXI. Or learn more online: <http://www.soberide.com>.

- ① For more information, visit:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1237,q,543147,mpdcNav_GID,1548.asp
- ① With more and more people shopping online this holiday season, DC Attorney General Robert Spagnoletti wants to ensure residents have a worry-free online experience. For tips on safe shopping via the Internet, go to:
http://oag.dc.gov/occ/cwp/view,a,11,q,620742,occNav_GID,1521.asp
- ① Charity scams are just one type of crime that can happen during the holidays. For a complete list of winter holiday safety tips for shoppers, travelers and when you're at home, check out:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1237,q,547767,mpdcNav_GID,1550,mpdcNav_|.asp
- ① For more winter driving safety tips, courtesy of AAA Mid-Atlantic, go to:
http://www.aaamidatlantic.com/safety/release_content.asp?id=2488
- ① Don't have a cell phone of your own, but would like to have one for emergencies? Check out an MPDC-supported program that collects, refurbishes and distributes 9-1-1 emergency cell phones free of charge:
mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1238,q,542209,mpdcNav_GID,1558.asp
- ① For other traffic safety tips that you can use during the winter and throughout the years, visit:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1240,q,548131.asp>

DATA BOX

Homicides	as of 12/9/05
◆ 2005: 187	
◆ 2004: 188	
◆ % Change: -0.5%	
◆ Closure Rate: 55.6% (104 closures)	
Adult Arrests	week end. 12/3/05
◆ Total: 836	
◆ Drugs: 157	
◆ Weapons: 22	
◆ Robbery: 12	
◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 20	
Juvenile Activity	week end. 12/3/05
◆ Arrests: 59	
◆ Curfew Violations: 45	
◆ Truants: 80	
Firearm Recoveries	as of 12/7/05
◆ December: 40	
◆ 2005 Total: 2,201	
Traffic Fatalities	as of 12/9/05
◆ 2005: 44	
◆ 2004: 43	
◆ % Change: +2.3%	

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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